No. 666 Twopence April, 1959

THE UNITARIAN

A MAGAZINE FOR FREE CHRISTIANS

LIBRARY STARR KING SCHOOL NOT TO BE TAKEN FROM BUILDING

OUR REBUILT CHURCHES

Unity Church, Islington, London

The congregation at Islington traces its history back to 1667, when, in defiance of the Act of Uniformity and the Conventicle Act, the first members met secretly under the ministry of the Rev. Matthew Sylvester. Since then there have been times of prosperity and times of adversity when the faith and vitality of the church have been severely tested.

One such testing time occurred in November, 1940, when a German bomb completely wrecked the Church building. This was a large impressive Church, built in 1862 in the Gothic style. Its nine lovely stained glass windows, the beautifully carved pulpit, the excellent organ, the fine communion table, and the striking life-size figure of Jesus were smashed to pieces. Fortunately the bomb fell at night and no one was hurt, but the Church had clearly gone for ever.

At last early in 1957 rebuilding started, and on November 1, 1958, the new Church was opened by Sir Adrian Boult. At the opening the Rev. Basil Viney conducted the Dedication Service, and the Mayor of Islington, the Secretary of the

General Assembly, the London District Minister, the Rev. Reginald Sorenson, M.P., and Mr. Kenneth Taylor, the architect, made short speeches.

The Rev. W. Waddington has written, "We are immeasurably indebted to Mr. Kenneth Taylor for the design and appointments of a strikingly beautiful and useful building, that must have far surpassed the glowing expectations of everybody concerned."

The new Church is a two-purpose building with one end, used as the chancel, cut off by folding doors. This chancel can be floodlit and contains the Communion Table and the Cross—a gift of one of the members. The main hall is brightly lit, has an excellent floor, and is amply warm even in the coldest weather. It will hold about one hundred and sixty people. In addition to the Cross a lectern, litany desk, hymn board, electric clock, chancel chair, vestry chair, new cups and saucers, and a Hoover floor polisher, have all been given by members and friends.

Besides the main hall the Church is provided with a small gallery that can be used as a separate room, and a new kitchen, vestry and cloakrooms.

At present the Church has no organ, but an Organ Fund, to which members and non-members have generously contributed, has already raised over £190.

The most famous minister of this Church was the Rev. Richard Baxter who refused a bishopric when he refused to conform in 1662. His ideal was a comprehensive Christian Church, where the practice of love and tolerance would be regarded as more important than belief in particular doctrines.

Every Church Calendar proclaims this ideal, saying that while freedom of thought has led most of the members to Unitarian views, they welcome "all who desire to worship God in the spirit of Jesus Christ."

Congregations are increasing and the future for Unity Church, Islington, looks bright.

A GREAT HUCKLOW IONA

By J. Keir Murren

(Editor's Note: The Rev. J. Keir Murren is critical of some aspects of the present Homes policy as outlined in the February issue of "The Unitarian." Mr. Murren was invited by the Homes Committee to outline his criticisms. The following article is the result of that invitation).

Within limited space I cannot be critically constructive in detail, but I do respond to the request to comment on one or two points.

I would still try to save the Children's Home site, our finest potential asset at Great Hucklow. It has a view unsurpassed for many miles around. The hill is effective protection from bad weather. The space available would allow for many varied developments. I still see this as the best place for children's work, as against putting the children nearer to the adults, which in my view will provoke endless dissension.

But there are also great commercial possibilities. Properly exploited, even a "mere summer cafe" open from May to September could be most attractive. People will journey many miles to take tea at the only spot near Hucklow which provides a view really worth seeing.

What about buildings? Again,

UNITY CHURCH, LONDON, N.1

The Organ Fund has now reached £200.

Can you please help us?

Organ Fund Treasurer: Miss Wilna Lumsden, 101, Wakelin House, London. N.1.

Minister: Rev. A. Victor Fox, 43, Seymour Avenue, London, N.10.

only a hint is possible. Is there enough virility in our youth movements to accept a major challenge? Could we not establish a ten-year work camp, sectionalised into yearly tasks, with at least two large international work camps, available throughout the summer months for students, teachers and young people? Under skilled direction, the stimulus might well last ten years—time enough to build almost anything we are likely to need; new homes, parts of new homes, cafe buildings, car parks, etc. If this were done in the right way, with the right sort of people, work and fellowship going hand in hand, never-ending groups discovering each other through working together, then this might be our own little IONA. Here youth and age might catch something of the best of each by a method which has proved itself over and over again.

I must, however, make a further controversial point. It is urgently necessary that Great Hucklow should be lifted to a national level. Legalities are quite beside the point. If Hucklow is to succeed, customers must come from *all* our churches, schools and youth groups. To-day people from distant parts are more likely to be attracted than are the "locals" from Manchester. At national level I would say that Hucklow is of such great value to the denomination that it is worth at least as much subsidy as many of our churches. A crippling loss to the Homes might well be trifling spread over the whole denomination.

To me it is absurd that Hucklow should remain a provincial issue. We must think about Hucklow nationally — be allowed to do so.

I make three points only. Don't sell the Children's Home and site—it is worth the rest of Hucklow put together. Evolve a Unitarian plan for a Hucklow IONA that will overcome all obstacles—even the drainage question. And lift the whole future to a national level before total disaster destroys the lot.

F.A. VERSUS G.A.

By T. J. Jones

I pose these two not by way of opposition, but of contrast.

Immediately after the feverish enthusiasm of the operations of the Football Association, comes (for us of the Unitarian following) the not-so-enthusiastic fervour of the General Assembly. What a pity it is that we cannot work up a moiety of the enthusiasm of the F.A. for the much more important activity of the G.A. It is not that we would wish to eliminate sport . . . it has its legitimate place; but rather, that we could sublimate some of its all-devouring interest in the cause of Religion, and especially of our Free Faith.

This is not a purely modern problem, but a perennial one; though none the less urgent for all that. St. Paul felt the same need when he was dealing with the Corinthians (see 1 Cor. chapter 9). He felt no compunction about using the sport-

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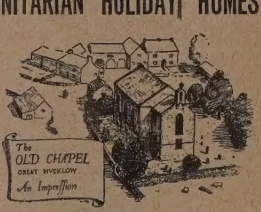

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ing terms of the Corinthian games in his call for religion, and tried to build a bridge between them.

Is there any way in which we might attempt to harness something of the verve of football to our faith? Is there a hint of tactic from the one that might benefit the other? I am tempted to suggest in this connection a lesson described by Flora Annie Steel in her autobiography. Having received great help from a certain colonel in India, and expressing a desire to repay him, she was told kindly, but firmly, "Pass it on, my dear." This seems to me to be salutary advice for kindness in general; but it is also helpful for football and for faith. "Passing" is an essential for football. It is no less necessary for faith and religion: we must learn to act as a "team," as a Unitarian Assembly not as an assemblage of units. And we must learn to pass our truth *on*. So often we merely pass it back . . . to the past; or around, amongst a little clique in the centre. "On" is where it should go, to score goals. Thus only shall our little David ever hope to drink of the "Cup of Salvation."

CHILDREN'S CORNER

Pirates Bold!

"Avast! Belay there! Splice the mainbrace! Up t'gallant!" roared a youthful voice.

"What does all *that* mean?" asked Lisbeth.

"Well, I'm not really . . . what?!! Dare you speak to me, wench? Out of my way, rabble"; he scattered two boys and a girl. "Make way for Black Raymond, the Scourge of the Caribbean!"

"The *what* of the Caribbean?"

"The Scourge."

"And what does that mean?"

"I—er I don't know really. They always called pirates something like that."

"Well, it doesn't fit you! You don't look like the scourge of anything." With his father's gumboots, an odd collection of shirts, skirts, long stockings and waistcoats; a battered hat; a red handkerchief round his head; a patch over one eye; and a curtain ring somehow fastened to his right ear, he looked a picture—but not of Captain Blood. But he was undaunted. He wielded a huge cardboard sword dangerously and spoke to his pirate band.

"I am Black Raymond and I'm here to challenge Sir Henry Morgan. He used to be one of us, but now he's the Governor of Jamaica. Where is the lily-livered . . ."

"Raymond, please," cried the wench Lisbeth. One of the boys, about half Raymond's size, stepped forward.

"Here I am, Black Raymond," quoth he.

"Where is your sword, Albert?" asked Lisbeth.

"Oh, I forgot," said Sir Henry Morgan and turned back to get it.

"Have at you!" yelled Black Raymond, and delivering a mighty swipe at Albert, missed, tripped over his sword and fell to the ground. Albert, very surprised, picked up his sword, placed his foot on his fallen foe and shouted: "Black Raymond is dead!"

"I am not," said that gentleman, much aggrieved, "that wasn't fair."

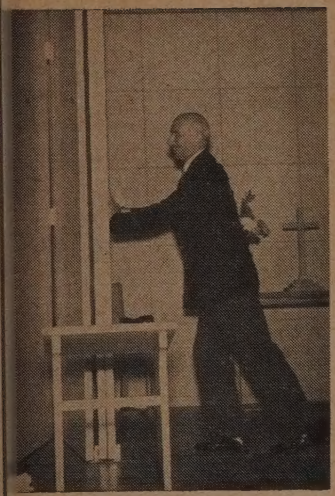
"He was fairer than you were," retorted Lisbeth. "Come Sir Henry, to the scaffold with him!"

But the Scourge of the Caribbean was saved at the eleventh hour by his mother who appeared and called: "Tea!"

The pirates quickly dispersed and the scaffold was forgotten.

UNITARIANS IN THE NEWS

Under the heading "Local Minister Fined," the "Bolton Evening News" recently reported: "The Rev. Eric Shirvell Price, Minister of Bank Street Chapel, was so busy sick-visiting last month that he forgot to renew the licence for his car. At Bolton Borough Court he was fined £1."



r Adrian Boult "opening" Unity Church, Islington.

HO'S WHO OF THE G.A. EETINGS, 1959

This year's G.A. Meetings are anned for Leeds and will open on uesday, April 7th.

There will be the usual reception the afternoon followed by the niversary service at which the eacher will be the Rev. Wilfred addington, B.A., B.D.

To Unitarians, Mr. Waddington eds no introduction. He has held storates at places as far distant om each other as Maidstone and otherham and for some years now s been the District Minister of e London and South-Eastern ovincial Assembly. Representing is body on the G.A. Council has i him to serve on various sub-mmittees of that body and to nder service in many directions.

Wednesday morning will see ministers and delegates gather for the annual business meeting. At this the Rt. Hon. J. Chuter Ede, P.C., M.P., will hand over his chain of office to his successor, the Rev. A. W. Vallance. The latter is a familiar figure to those who attend the annual meetings for he has appeared on its platforms on a number of occasions. His Editorship of *The Unitarian* and his service to Churches generally in the Manchester area has made him one of the best known of our ministers and certainly one meriting the high office to which he is soon to be called.

Delegates attending the business meeting will find some important matters coming up for discussion. There will be submitted reports dealing with ministerial stipends and the uses of our manpower resources, and with these reports will be tabled definite resolutions outlining policy for the future.

"Unitarians Face the Future" is the theme for the evening meeting which is always one of the special features of the G.A. meetings. Speakers at this will be the Rev. A. B. Downing, B.A., B.D., who serves our congregations at Dean Row and Syal and whose stimulating writings in *The Inquirer* have gained him interest of the movement generally. With him on the platform also to speak to this theme will be Martin Davies of the Y.P.L. and Miss Eileen Kielty.

Social Service is the subject for Friday morning's session. At this a report "The Churches and Social Service" will be introduced by the Rev. Arthur Peacock, Secretary of the G.A. Social Service Department. The report is the work of a small commission which has been examining what opportunities for social service exist for individuals and congregations to-day. Mr. Pocock has directed the work of this Commission during the year and also the study arising from last year's "Call to Freedom" resolution.

"This is a poor reflection on the Movement."

As usual the meetings will conclude with a devotional address and the preacher will be the Rev. Miles Thomas, who serves our cause at Llandyssul and is a member of the G.A. Council.

There will be, of course, the Annual Essex Hall Lecture on the morning of Thursday, April 9th. The lecturer will be the Rev. C. H. Rhodes, Director of the Modern Churchman's Union, who until recently was Editor of "The Church of England Newspaper." Appropriately his subject is "Mass Communications and the Spirit of Man."

These are the main items of the G.A. week. Further details will be announced later of speakers at the various auxiliary organisations' meetings.

NEWS AND VIEWS

HOME CHURCHES

Unity Church, SHEFFIELD, has just celebrated its one hundredth Anniversary in great style. Last November the Mistress Cutler, Lady Pickworth, opened the Centenary Bazaar, which realised £320. On Sunday, January 4th, the first day of the celebrations proper, the President of the General Assembly preached at the evening service. On the following Thursday Professor W. H. G. Armitage of the University, spoke of Sheffield as it was when the Church was founded in a disused carpenter's shop as a missionary enterprise on the part o Upper Chapel. Unity Hall wa packed on Friday, January 9th, fo the Centenary Dinner. Mr. C. H Dolphin presided and chief guest were the Lord Mayor and Lad Mayoress. A Young People Centenary Party was held o Saturday evening. The mornin service on January 10th was con ducted by the Rt. Rev. J. W. Dye Moderator of the Non-Subscribin Presbyterian Church of Ireland, former minister of Unity. Th Church was floodlit throughout th week and the Press coverage wa good.

The local Caledonian Society an a Highland Piper contributed special strvices at WHITBY an SCARBOROUGH to commemorate th bi-centenary of the birth of Robe Burns. Both Churches are showin obvious signs of new life.

Mr. P. Jones has accepted th invitation to be the Lay Pastor King Edward Street Chapel, MACCLE FIELD, and minister when he qualifi in 1960. It has recently been di covered that the walls of the Chap are moving slightly. It is intende to buttress and tie them. A donatio of £100 towards the large cost i volved has been received from th Cheshire Churches Historical Trus The help of many Lay Preachers ha been greatly appreciated while th Chapel has been without a ministe

Young people replaced minist and choir at STAND on Youth Sunda Susan Bridge conducted the servi (based on the last verse of hym 141) and Martin West preached th sermon. Mr. Paul Barber, of Dento was the third speaker in the seri "Why I am a Unitarian."

The future of NANTWICH Church being considered by the Trustee Costly repairs make closure or dem lition likely. American Unitaria want to buy the pulpit from whic Dr. Joseph Priestley, "father" British chemistry and discoverer oxygen, preached.

At the annual meeting of the con-gation at PLYMOUTH, appreciation the work of the minister, Rev. H. Kersley, was demonstrated by creasing his stipend from £400 to 00 per annum, and there were pressions of regret at his impend- resignation.

The U.Y.P.L. has reformed at ITY CHURCH, Bolton. A condition membership will be monthly endance at a service.

The Youth Sunday Service at TRINCHAM was addressed by Barrie edham on the theme from Emer- "God offers to every man the oice between freedom and repose." e schoolroom was a depot for thing for refugees on two days in arch.

ROCHDALE held a palm court even- recently. It was opened by Miss arrow of the Rochdale and Dis- ct Blind Welfare Society.

At LEEDS, Priestley Hall is being ered, redecorated and refurnished. committee is considering the needs the Church itself. The Women's ague Annual Service was held at RTON on Mothering Sunday. The eacher was Mrs. M. Bonner. The eacher on Youth Sunday was Mr. ith Craney.

The Youth Sunday Service at DHAM was conducted by Wilfred yle. For the annual Sunday hool outing scholars went to the brary Theatre pantomime.

The University of London itarian Society conducted the uth Service at ISLINGTON. Mr. S. R. rtin was the preacher.

The preacher at CHORLTON on uth Sunday was Mr. D. Harrison. he U.Y.P.L. conducted the service. eacher at the Annual Women's ague service was the Rev. Joyce azelhurst, M.A.

Mr. W. W. Windbury preached on Ideals" at the Men's League nual Service at KIDDERMINSTER. r. W. B. Walters conducted the rvice.

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By Arthur Peacock
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The Lindsey Press, Essex Hall, 1—6, Essex Street, London, W.C.2.

MANCHESTER DISTRICT W.L. REPORT

The 45th Annual Meeting of the Manchester District Women's League was held at Brookfield Church on Saturday, February 14th. Our guest preacher was Mrs. C. Bradshaw, president of the Liverpool District, and the soloist Miss M. Lane. In her address Mrs. Bradshaw told us a story of human effort and courage. Great men and women attain their eminence, not by luck, but by great sacrifices. We must all put into life something of our own personality if we are to expect the

best from God. At the business meeting after tea the officers were re-elected and reports accepted. After a few brief but well chosen remarks the retiring president, Mrs. Whitehouse, B.Sc., fastened the badge of office on to the new president, Mrs. J. O'Brien, who was welcomed with great applause. It is just 25 years ago that her mother, Mrs. Roper, held the same office. Mrs. Lear then presented Mrs. Whitehouse with a spray of flowers as a token of our gratitude and affection for the way she has served the Manchester District during her term of office.

"THE DAILY MIRROR," PERHAPS . . .

"The *Unitarian* is to the Inquirer as the 'Daily Sketch' is to the 'Times.'"

—*From a speech at the dinner of the Memorial Hall, Manchester, Trustees.*

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A PRELIMINARY NOTICE

The opening and dedication of the new Church at Wythenshawe will take place on Saturday, June 6th, 1959. The REV. A. W. VALLANCE, President of the General Assembly will officiate.

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